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SUBJECT: USAF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS SPECIALIST (IAS) PROGRAM:
OPPORTUNITIES AND APPLICATION GUIDELINES

PASS TO ALL AIR FORCE OFFICERS

1. INTRODUCTION. TODAY'S DYNAMIC SECURITY ENVIRONMENT AND EXPEDITIONARY NATURE OF AIR AND SPACE OPERATIONS REQUIRE A CADRE OF AIR FORCE PROFESSIONALS WITH INTERNATIONAL INSIGHT, FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY, AND CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING. THE INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS SPECIALIST (IAS) PROGRAM OFFERS AIRMEN EXCITING OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN AND FULLY DEVELOP THESE KEY 21ST CENTURY MILITARY SKILLS. COMPETITIVE OFFICERS WILL BE SELECTED AT THE MID-CAREER POINT FOR DELIBERATE DEVELOPMENT AND UTILIZATION IN DEMANDING INTERNATIONAL/POLITICAL-MILITARY ASSIGNMENTS AS INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS SPECIALISTS. THESE OFFICERS WILL BE CAREFULLY MANAGED TO REMAIN VIABLE AND COMPETITIVE IN THEIR PRIMARY CAREER SPECIALTIES WHILE DEVELOPING A STRONG FOUNDATION IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS.

2. OVERVIEW. UNDER THE IAS PROGRAM, SELECT OFFICERS ARE DESIGNATED ON AN IAS SECONDARY CAREER PATH AT THE MID-CAREER POINT (TYPICALLY 7-12 YEARS ACTIVE COMMISSIONED SERVICE) AND RECEIVE FORMAL TRAINING AND EDUCATION WITH APPROPRIATE FOLLOW-ON ASSIGNMENTS ON ONE OF TWO DEVELOPMENT PATHS. SOME WILL DO THIS AS A WELL-MANAGED, CAREER BROADENING OPPORTUNITY TO GAIN INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL-MILITARY AFFAIRS EXPERIENCE AS A POL-MIL AFFAIRS STRATEGIST (PAS - 16P AFSC). FOR OTHERS THIS WILL BE A MORE DEMANDING DEVELOPMENTAL OPPORTUNITY WITH MULTIPLE IAS ASSIGNMENTS AS A REGIONAL AFFAIRS STRATEGIST (RAS - 16F AFSC).

A. POL-MIL AFFAIRS STRATEGIST (PAS). IDENTIFICATION FOR PAS DEVELOPMENT OCCURS IN CONJUNCTION WITH SELECTION FOR INTERMEDIATE DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION (IDE), TYPICALLY AROUND THE 10-12 YEAR COMMISSIONED SERVICE POINT. OFFICERS DESIGNATED ON THIS IAS DEVELOPMENT PATH WILL ACCOMPLISH ONE OF FOUR PROGRAMS: AIR COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE (ACSC) WITH THE POL-MIL SPECIALIZED STUDY TRACK; NAVAL POST-GRADUATE SCHOOL (NPS) MASTERS DEGREE PROGRAM; ENGLISH-SPEAKING FOREIGN IDE SCHOOL; OR THE POLAD INTERNSHIP. PAS-DESIGNATES WILL THEN SERVE IN A POL-MIL AFFAIRS ASSIGNMENT ON

THEIR FIRST OR SECOND ASSIGNMENT POST-IDE. FURTHER DEVELOPMENTAL OPPORTUNITIES ON THE PAS TRACK MAY BE AVAILABLE AS DETERMINED BY THE OFFICER'S PRIMARY AFSC FUNCTIONAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM AND THE NEEDS OF THE AIR FORCE.

B. REGIONAL AFFAIRS STRATEGIST (RAS). RAS DESIGNATION TYPICALLY OCCURS WITHIN THE 7-10 YEAR COMMISSIONED SERVICE WINDOW. OFFICERS DESIGNATED ON THIS IAS DEVELOPMENT PATH WILL ACCOMPLISH AN 18-27 MONTH EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAM, RECEIVING A REGIONALLY-FOCUSED ADVANCED DEGREE (AREA STUDIES, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, NATIONAL SECURITY STUDIES, ETC.), BASIC LANGUAGE TRAINING IN A SPECIFIC LANGUAGE OF THEIR REGION OF STUDY, AND POSSIBILITIES FOR ADVANCED LANGUAGE TRAINING THROUGH IN-COUNTRY IMMERSION. RAS DESIGNATES WILL GAIN IN-DEPTH INTERNATIONAL EXPERTISE BY ALTERNATING ASSIGNMENTS BETWEEN THEIR PRIMARY CAREER SPECIALTY AND IAS. WHERE POSSIBLE, THESE ASSIGNMENTS SHOULD BE COMBINED SUCH THAT AN ASSIGNMENT IN A PRIMARY AFSC-RELATED POSITION OCCURS WITHIN THE GEOGRAPHIC AREA OF SPECIALIZATION. THIS MORE DEMANDING, DUAL DEVELOPMENT TRACK WILL BE CAREFULLY MANAGED TO ENSURE COMPETITIVE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES EXIST ON BOTH THE PRIMARY AFSC AND IAS CAREER PATHS.

3. SELECTION. IAS SELECTION QUOTAS ARE DISTRIBUTED THROUGH MOST LINE CAREER FIELDS TO OBTAIN AN APPROPRIATE MIX OF OFFICERS ABLE TO SERVE IN IAS POSITIONS. CURRENTLY, OFFICERS IN THE FOLLOWING CAREER FIELDS WILL NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE IAS PROGRAM: MEDICAL, CHAPLAIN, AND JUDGE ADVOCATE.

A. ELIGIBILITY. DEVELOPMENT TEAMS WILL CONSIDER COMPETITIVE ACTIVE DUTY LINE OFFICERS ALREADY QUALIFIED IN A PRIMARY AIR FORCE CAREER SPECIALTY. FOR PAS DESIGNATION, OFFICERS WOULD TYPICALLY HAVE 10-12 YEARS OF COMMISSIONED SERVICE AND BE IDE "SELECTS". WORLD-WIDE DEPLOYABLE OFFICERS AT THE 7-10 YEAR COMMISSIONED SERVICE POINT WILL BE CONSIDERED FOR RAS DESIGNATION. THERE WILL BE LIMITED IAS DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR OFFICERS BEYOND THE NORMAL ELIGIBILITY WINDOW, PRIMARILY THROUGH FOREIGN IDE/SDE PROGRAMS. ALL OFFICERS DESIGNATED FOR IAS DEVELOPMENT MUST POSSESS AN ACTIVE SECRET CLEARANCE, AND MUST BE ABLE TO OBTAIN A TOP SECRET CLEARANCE. VISIT THE FOLLOWING AFPC WEB SITE FOR MORE DETAILS:
[HTTPS://WWW.AFPC.RANDOLPH.AF.MIL/RATED-STAFF/IAS.HTM](https://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/rated-staff/ias.htm).

B. APPLICATION. DEVELOPMENT TEAMS WILL BEGIN VECTORING PAS CANDIDATES IN SPRING 2006; RAS VECTORS WILL BEGIN IN FALL 2006. (SEE [HTTP://WWW.AFPC.RANDOLPH.AF.MIL/FDSO/](http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/fdso/) FOR TIMELINES.) INTERESTED OFFICERS SHOULD SUBMIT A T-ODP (AND AF FORM 3849 FOR IDE/SDE ELIGIBLES) THROUGH THEIR REVIEWER/SENIOR RATER TO THEIR PRIMARY AFSC FUNCTIONAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM. THE T-ODP MUST EXPRESS DESIRE FOR IAS DEVELOPMENT AND INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

B(1). PREFERENCE FOR DESIGNATION AS PAS (16P) OR RAS (16F).

B(2). FOR RAS, OFFICERS MAY RANK ORDER THEIR REGIONAL PREFERENCES

FROM THE FOLLOWING LIST: MIDDLE EAST/NORTH AFRICA; CHINA; EURASIA; SOUTHEAST ASIA; NORTHEAST ASIA; SOUTH ASIA; SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA; LATIN AMERICA; EUROPE. WHILE EVERY ATTEMPT WILL BE MADE TO MATCH RAS SELECTS WITH THEIR TOP PREFERENCE, NEEDS OF THE AIR FORCE MUST BE GIVEN PRIMARY CONSIDERATION. A RAS APPLICANT IS CONSIDERED A

VOLUNTEER FOR EVERY REGION ALONG WITH A FOREIGN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATED WITH THAT REGION. INCLUDE THE STATEMENT "I AM A VOLUNTEER FOR ANY RAS OPPORTUNITY OFFERED."

B(3). A DEFENSE LANGUAGE APTITUDE BATTERY (DLAB) SCORE IS REQUIRED FOR RAS CONSIDERATION. CONTACT THE TESTING OFFICIAL AT YOUR LOCAL MPF TO ACCOMPLISH THE DLAB. AN APPLICATION FOR RAS WILL BE CONSIDERED INCOMPLETE IF A DLAB SCORE IS NOT DOCUMENTED IN THE OFFICER'S RECORD.

B(4). LANGUAGE SKILLS/PROFICIENCY LEVEL AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS-RELATED EDUCATION NOT IDENTIFIED ON YOUR PERSONNEL BRIEF.

B(5). REVIEWER/SENIOR RATER RECOMMENDATION SHOULD INCLUDE STATEMENTS RELATING TO OFFICER'S DEMONSTRATED MATURITY AND ABILITY TO REPRESENT THE AF AND DOD IN THE INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT.

C. DESIGNATION. BASED ON ASSIGNED SELECTION, TRAINING, AND DEVELOPMENT QUOTAS, DEVELOPMENT TEAMS WILL DESIGNATE OFFICERS FOR IAS ON EITHER THE PAS OR RAS PATH. PAS DESIGNATION WILL OCCUR IN CONJUNCTION WITH VECTORS FOR IDE. RAS DESIGNATION WILL TYPICALLY OCCUR IN CONJUNCTION WITH SUMMER ASSIGNMENT VECTORS. SELECTED OFFICERS WILL NORMALLY BEGIN PAS OR RAS TRAINING THE SUMMER FOLLOWING SELECTION.

D. OFFICERS WITH EXISTING INTERNATIONAL SKILLS. OFFICERS WITH EXISTING INTERNATIONAL SKILLS ARE ENCOURAGED TO APPLY FOR IAS UTILIZATION ASSIGNMENTS. OFFICERS DESIRING TO PURSUE PAS ASSIGNMENTS SHOULD POSSESS AN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS-FOCUSED ADVANCED ACADEMIC DEGREE. OFFICERS DESIRING TO PURSUE RAS ASSIGNMENTS SHOULD POSSESS A REGIONALLY FOCUSED ADVANCED DEGREE AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE SKILLS. INTERESTED OFFICERS WILL SUBMIT A T-ODP FOR DEVELOPMENT TEAM CONSIDERATION IAW PARA 3B ABOVE.

F. TRANSITION. LAST YEAR 56 PAS AND 33 RAS OFFICERS WERE COMPETITIVELY SELECTED FOR DELIBERATE DEVELOPMENT AND UTILIZATION AS INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS SPECIALISTS. OVER THE NEXT TWO YEARS THE AF WILL RAMP UP SELECTION TO A STEADY STATE OF 59 RAS AND 100 PAS PER YEAR. AS WE GROW THE IAS CADRE OVER THE NEXT DECADE, IAS REQUIREMENTS WILL CONTINUE TO BE FILLED BY THE BEST-QUALIFIED OFFICERS WITH SOME OR ALL OF THE REQUISITE SKILLS. DURING THIS PERIOD OF TRANSITION, REGARDLESS OF IAS DESIGNATION, OFFICERS WITH INTERNATIONAL SKILLS WILL STILL BE DESIRED/SOUGHT FOR IAS DEVELOPMENTAL ASSIGNMENTS BASED ON THE NEEDS OF THE AIR FORCE.

4. SUMMARY.

A. THE IAS PROGRAM IS A TREMENDOUS DEVELOPMENTAL OPPORTUNITY FOR AIRMEN DESIRING CHALLENGING AND REWARDING ASSIGNMENTS IN THE INTERNATIONAL/POLITICAL-MILITARY ENVIRONMENT. SENIOR DOD AND AIR FORCE LEADERS WANT AND NEED AIRMEN WITH THESE IMPORTANT SKILLS. THE AIR FORCE GOAL IS CLEAR--DELIBERATELY DEVELOP PROFESSIONAL AIRMEN WITH INTERNATIONAL INSIGHT, FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY, AND CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING. THESE SKILLS ARE CRUCIAL FORCE MULTIPLIERS THAT WILL SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF AIR AND SPACE POWER.

B. IAS PROGRAM INFORMATION IS BEING INCORPORATED INTO A REWRITE OF

AFI 16-109, TO BE RELEASED THIS SPRING. TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE IAS PROGRAM AND IMPLEMENTATION UPDATES, GO TO THE IAS WEBSITE ON THE AF PORTAL [HTTPS://WWW.MY.AF.MIL/IAW/IAW](https://www.my.af.mil/iaw/iaw). INTERESTED OFFICERS SHOULD ADDRESS QUALIFICATION QUESTIONS TO THEIR APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENTAL TEAM. QUESTIONS ON THE PROGRAM OR CONCERNS ON THIS MESSAGE MAY BE ADDRESSED TO SAF/IA, DSN 425-8349/8321.

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